

At the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa

Then Scholarship Foundation receives generous donation



PALM BEACH – The Radisson Aruba Resort's 50th Anniversary Fundraising Gala Dinner benefited the Aruba Scholarship Foundation. The black-tie affair at the end of July was an enchanting evening of dining & entertainment which took off in the ballroom foyer with a cocktail party serving welcome Champagne Bellinis & hors d'oeuvres, and continued with music and dance to the wee hours, commemorating five decades of music and hospitality.

Guests were delighted with the tremendous Big Band music taking them back to the '60s as they dined on a retro

menu prepared by the resort's culinary team. Following dessert, the room started moving and grooving to the sounds of the '70s and '80s. Once warmed up, band leader Claudius Philips and OREO continued with many of Billboard's Top 40 hits from the '80s, '90s, and up to today. It was a golden moment in time, as the Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa celebrated memories and promoted the worthy cause of the Aruba Scholarship Foundation.

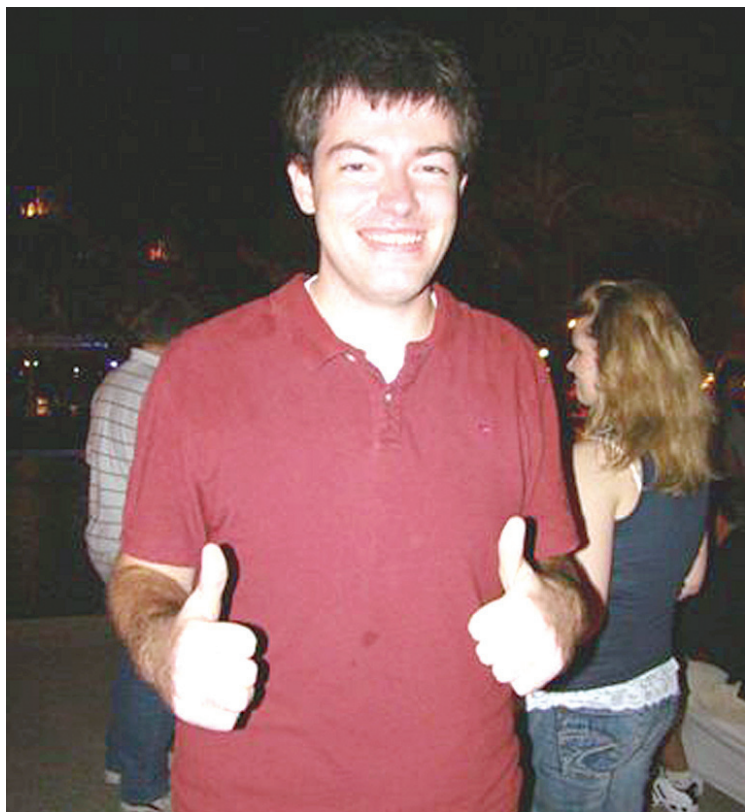
A number of paintings were also auctioned on the occasion, to benefit the cause.

The resort's Director of Operations Rachel



Noordermeer presented the check to the Scholarship Foundation representatives Clyde Harms and Jan Van Nes, and wished to thank the many contributing sponsors: Interprint, Heineken, Romar Trading, Aruba Trading Company, Tropical Bottling Company, Island Temptations and Marketing Plus NV, artist Elvis Tromp who donated three canvas originals depicting the Grande Dame, the famed 50 year old building originally designed by American architect Morris Lapidus in the late '50s, from different angles, and its many ticket buyers who gave generously to the excellent celebration. □

Farewell to UltimateBet's 2009 Poker Classic



Winner UltimateBet 2009 Poker Classic, Brandon Hall

PALM BEACH – The UltimateBet's Aruba Poker Classic wrapped up its exciting week on the island with Brandon Hall, 20, from Littleton, Pennsylvania as the ultimate winner and 474 other content poker players from around the globe pocketing over \$2.3 in prize money.

Hall, a first-time visitor to the island was pleased to also hand over to Matt Savage, tournament emcee the funds collected here for Imeldahof Children's Home, the charity of choice for the week-long mega-event.

Headquartered at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa for the past five year, the website hosting the tournament, UltimateBet.com, just celebrated its 10th

year anniversary, attesting to the ever-growing popularity of poker.

The welcome party around the resort tropical pool and the farewell banquet and award ceremony are always very memorable, extravagant events, nicely orchestrated by the resort's culinary and banquet teams.

Continued on Pages 8 & 9



Price of a barrel of petroleum
US\$ 75.21
↑0.03

Small Plane Carrying Drugs Explodes Over Caribbean Sea

ORANJESTAD, Aruba — A small plane carrying drugs crashed off the tiny Dutch island of Bonaire, killing a pilot and a passenger, authorities said Wednesday.

Franklin Benito, a duty officer with the Netherlands Antilles Coast Guard, said the single-engine plane caught fire and exploded over the Caribbean Sea late Tuesday.

Shortly after the plane took off from the tiny Dutch island, a witness reported seeing "a ball of fire in the air," Benito said.

Several bales of drugs were found floating amid the wreckage. Little was known about the plane, and authorities did not immediately disclose what type of drugs were found.

The two dead men were not identified, and authorities were searching Wednesday for signs of other victims. The charred body of the pilot was found strapped to his seat.

Bonaire is among the Caribbean islands used as a transit point by drug smugglers from South America. The island of 12,000 people is located about 50 miles (80 kilometers) off the coast of Venezuela. □



Only on October 18

ChinoLatino goes all-out with its Indonesian Rijsttafel



PALM BEACH - Don't forget to write the date October 18 down in your diary, as you would not want to miss a terrific special at ChinoLatino restaurant at The Village. A superb

Indonesian Rijsttafel, cooked up by chef Marcel, is waiting for you then. For just US \$ 20.—per person, you will be in a culinary heaven, tasting the Ajam Smoor chicken

stew, Sambal Boontje, green beans, fried eggs Indonesian-style, Chicken Saté and Bami Goreng and Nasi Goreng.

For those who are not familiar with the Indonesian



kitchen, the evening will be a trip in wonderland. Taste buds will go into overdrive when the spices and herbs, vegetables and meats come together in a feast. When Indonesia used to be in Dutch hands, its healthy and exotic dishes became favorites really soon and the people from Holland have embraced the Indonesian kitchen

ever since. The Indonesian Rijsttafel is especially good: a bountiful buffet with many dishes.

ChinoLatino's special buffet night starts at 5 pm. The kitchen keeps serving until 10. The restaurant can be found across from the Radisson Resort at The Village complex. □



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At The Westin Resort, Aruba

Distinguished visitors and VIPs acknowledged at Managers Cocktail Party



PALM BEACH - The island of Aruba enjoys the highest return of tourists in the Caribbean, with more than 50% of tourists being repeat guests to the island. Many of the return guests have been to the island so many times, that they call Aruba a home away from home. This week, a group

staying at The Westin Resort, Aruba was welcomed during the resort's weekly Managers Cocktail Party by Nathalie Maduro from the Aruba Tourism Authority, along with Westin General Manager Richard Roy and Director of Sales Pat Donovan. Nathalie was there to thank them for

their loyalty to the island for the last 30-plus years. "We know that when selecting your vacation destination, you have many islands to choose from. On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority and our entire island community, we thank you for continuing to come back to Aruba year after year," said



Nathalie. The Aruba Tourism Authority presented the group with special gifts, and The Westin Resort, Aruba prepared a cake in their honor (pictured are members of the 30-plus group-Toni Piekarski, Donald Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Harvath, the Ciarleglios, the Cozzis, the Tullis, the Gretos, the Scotts, and the Careys-with Nathalie Maduro, Richard Roy, and Pat

Donovan).

Also at the Managers Cocktail Party were Irene Goossens, a travel executive with Thomas Cook Netherlands, and her parents (pictured with Nathalie Maduro and Pat Donovan), as well as Mr. and Mrs. Doughty from the Rexel Group (pictured here with Pat Donovan and Robert Zarra from Westin). □



The Perfect combination of sounds and flavors

Famous steel drum player Lee Connor tonight at Moby Dick's



PASEO HERENCIA - Lee Connor, who composes and arranges all of his own music, dishes up the sounds of calypso using synthesizers and steel drums will play this evening at Moby Dick's Seafood Restaurant in the Paseo Herencia Mall. This will be a great and unique dinner experience for all as the under-water-world atmosphere combined with the Caribbean flavors of the restaurant and sounds of Lee Connor's pans will afford an

unforgettable evening. You definitely have to go to Moby Dick's Seafood Restaurant to enjoy an evening like this. The menu is loaded with fabulous sensations from the sea as well as tender tastes from the land. Besides having the most incredible cocktails, Moby Dick's is the only place on the island to savor the legendary Bloody Oyster - the ultimate delicacy only known by deep sea connoisseurs who take pleasure in its delight on Sunday mornings. No need



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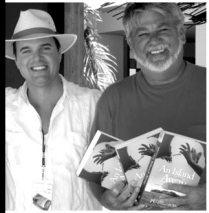
Plan menu's, assure quality control and food cost control.

Ability to communicate in Papiamentu and Spanish is preferred.

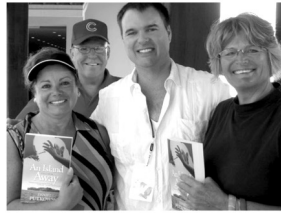
If interested and qualified, please send your cv to michel@elgaucho-aruba.com or deliver it personally at our offices in Wilhelminastraat 80.

to wait for Sunday for this deep sea concoction of Fresh Oysters, Cooked Shrimp, Cold Vodka, Tomato Juice, Tabasco, Lime Juice, Black Pepper and Celery. See you there tonight for the perfect combination of Caribbean sounds paired with island flavors. □





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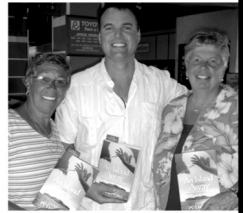
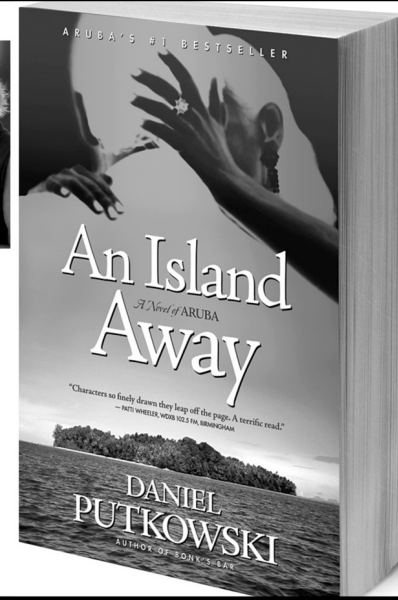
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Calling the bluff

Dutch Justice Minister Ernst Hirsch-Ballin tried to address growing criticism over his proposed Kingdom Law on Movement of People during a meeting with Antillean Prime Minister Emily de Jongh-Elhage in Willemstad. He agreed to enter into consultations with the governments of Aruba, the Netherlands Antilles, Curaçao and St. Maarten to look at possible improvements in the draft legislation.

His statements did little to take away the concerns among particularly Curaçao groups such as "Korsou Fuerte i Outonomo".

They still see the draft law as a veiled admittance and expulsion regulation for Antilleans in the Netherlands, which also opens up the possibility to send people living there who create problems back to the islands. For that matter, Hirsch-Ballin himself stated that his intention was to eliminate existing obstacles for Dutch citizens

from Europe, the Antilles and Aruba to travel freely within the Kingdom. This creates the impression that the proposal may be inspired by the fact that the Antilles and Aruba for their part have always had admittance and expulsion regulations restricting the possibilities for European Dutchmen to settle and work on the islands, while there is no such regulation for Antilleans and Arubans in the Netherlands.

This discrepancy could always be defended because of the size of the islands and their labour markets compared to that of Holland, but over the years the restrictions for European Dutchmen have been relaxed – also to attract Dutch pensioners, the so-called "penshonados" to the islands for economic reasons. Nevertheless, certain limitations still exist, as recently became evident in Aruba when European Dutchmen who had been on the island longer than six months

were notified that they had overstayed their welcome.

This continued discrepancy has given the Dutch Government a strong argument to introduce a Kingdom Law on Movement of People. State Secretary for Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten said recently it would "level the playing field."

If the Antilles and Aruba were to remove the remaining restrictions for European Dutchmen, that argument would effectively be thrown out the window.

The notion that people from Holland would flood the islands and take all jobs is in any case outdated at best, considering the much better salaries and secondary benefits in the Netherlands.

We therefore propose that the Antilles and Aruba call The Hague's bluff and indeed level the playing field by allowing Dutch Europeans to live and work on the islands without restriction, as is currently the case with Antilleans and



Arubans in the Netherlands. The idea that they would present a real threat is quite frankly based on the kind of inferior thinking that should by now be a thing of the past. □

Objection to Kingdom Law on the Movement of People

WILLEMSTAD--The proposal for a Kingdom Law on the Movement of People is unacceptable, says foundation "Kòrsou Fuerte i Outónomo" (KFO) in an open letter to Dutch Minister of Justice Ernst Hirsch Ballin (CDA), while he was visiting Curaçao.

The foundation of professionals who had supported the "No" option in the recent constitutional referendum announced via the letter that they would not relent in their opposition to such a law.

KFO pointed out to Hirsch Ballin that not only the Parliament of the Netherlands Antilles but the Island Council of Curaçao had vigorously denounced the draft Kingdom Law in the meantime.

"This intended legal regulation by the Netherlands is an example of the general tendency in your country,

where these kinds of regulations are considered a solution to the problems with Antillean youngsters, without bearing in mind the human rights of those involved."

According to KFO, the citizens of the Antilles have free entry to the Netherlands.

"The approach to the problems of a specific group or [of] high-risk youngsters in the Netherlands through a law that has legal force in the entire Kingdom is heavy artillery, and [is] not an appropriate means to solve a problem that is taking place in the Netherlands, and this so-called solution does not serve a legitimate purpose."

The foundation describes the leaked draft of the Kingdom Law as "another attempt to bar Antillean

and Aruban Dutch citizens from the territory of the Kingdom in Europe, based on their origin."

This law follows the line of reasoning of the Antilleans Cross-reference Index VIA and the Repatriation Regulation, both of which had a repressive character, says KFO.

"You even go as far as making it legally possible, in the framework of this law, to detain Antillean and Aruban Dutch citizens, while this had never been the case in the past.

Even if the Council of State had given the green light, as happened in the past ... with VIA, as a nation we will never ever cease our opposition to such a law." □

*** Human Hints Daily ***

Alter Your Patterns

Our behavioral patterns are created in our subconscious, which is based in Separation. They are stored in our physical DNA as vibrational energy, in the brain as synaptic pathways and chemically as hormonal release patterns. No wonder it's so hard to shed our old ways.

In the three dimensional illusion, we get stuck in automatic reaction to external stimuli. We seek circumstances in which we play the same unconscious role, over and

over. We become typecast and comfortable with the character we play. When we get bored with the patterns, we begin to see them.

Seeing your own patterns marks a notable change in your perspective. You gain the ability to see from your spirit's point of view, and this allows you to consciously alter your patterns. You transform from powerless reaction into empowered action. Even while you're in automatic reaction, you step outside of yourself and watch. Your love for

yourself will give you the courage to change.

When you recognize a pattern that you're in, ask yourself how you can handle it differently this time. What alternative outcome would you prefer, and what different actions might take you there? Make a definite change in your pattern to consciously alter the result. This snaps you out of your pattern and shows you possibilities for different outcomes. When you change a pattern, you will see that you have been

free all along.

It does not matter if things turn out the way you want or expect them to. What matters is that you changed the pattern. You shocked the cycle and altered the typical outcome. Opportunities that you have never considered will appear, as new probabilities gain strength based on your new direction.

Make sure you want to break the old cycle. Look at the pattern and decide what you want to do differently this time. Think of the new outcome you want, then act in that direction. Don't think twice about the result of your new action, it matters only that you take action to break a cycle.

When the pattern collapses, don't resist. Rarely do we get what we expect. When we get the unexpected, we naturally look to the secure past for answers. The automatic patterns we're breaking serve as our most reliable support structures. When we release our old patterns, we eat away at the foundation that holds us.

Until Tomorrow...

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought.

HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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PALM BEACH – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

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The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers up a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but **Texas de Brazil's** version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, home-made soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, **Texas de Brazil** will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

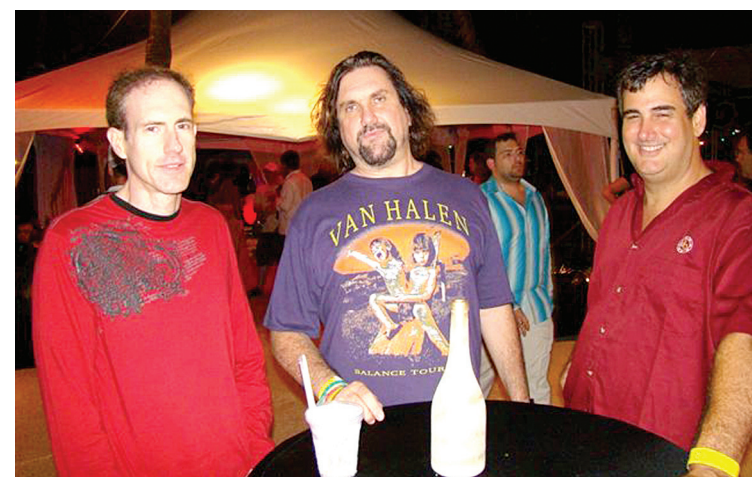
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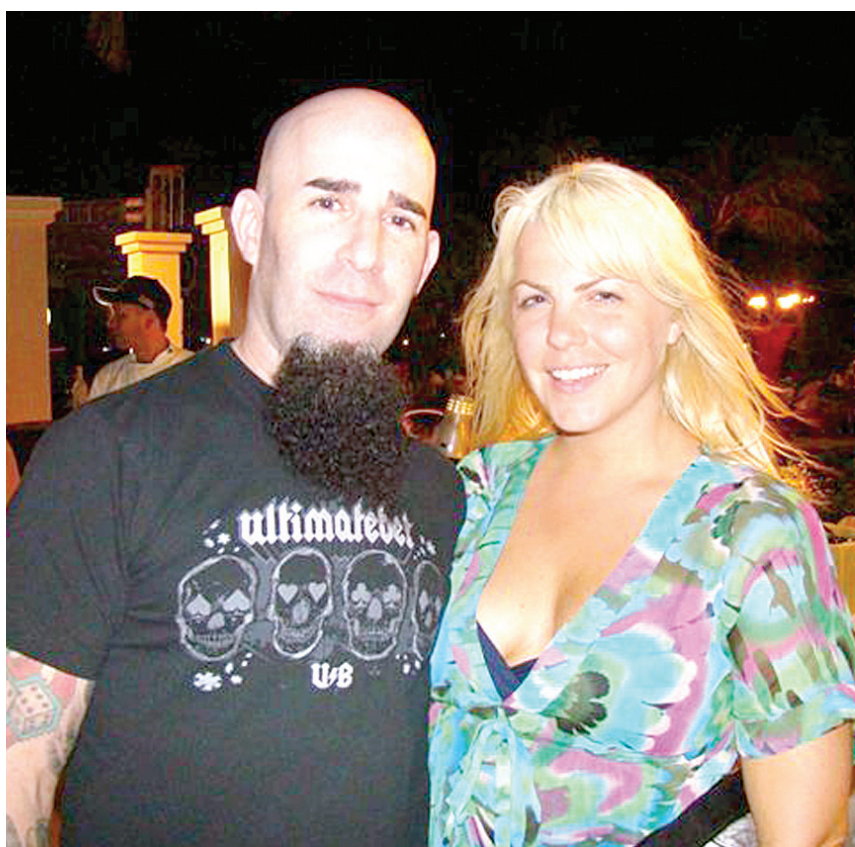
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Farewell to UltimateBet's 2009 Poker Classic



Continued from Front Page
In our pictures, poker royalty Phil Helmuth, Vegas comedian Vinnie Favorito, Matt Savage, winner Brandon Hall, Scott Ian of the band



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EAGLE BEACH - Oasis Luxury Condominiums is a Mediterranean-style designed complex located on the prestigious Eagle Beach right next to Chalet Suisse consisting of a total of 35 units distributed on five (5) floors. The one, two and three bedroom suites have a perfect view of the ocean and beach. The units include, among other amenities, floor to ceiling glass doors and panoramic windows, spacious terraces, marble bathrooms, European kitchens

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tributed on five (5) floors. The entrance of the building has a drive-up covered entrance and an elegant two-story lobby leading to the sun-filled hallways and corridors. The common area will facilitate the owners with a well-equipped gym overlooking the gardens and the pool.

with granite counter tops and a full stainless steel appliance package including washer and dryer. This 35-condominium complex will feature a beautiful swimming pool with a beach style entry with waterfalls and fountain and state of the art fiber optic lighting. The entrance of the building has a drive-up covered entrance and an elegant two-story lobby leading to the sun-filled hallways and corridors. The common area will facilitate the owners with a well-equipped gym overlooking the gardens and the pool.

The garden will feel like an oasis true to the projects name. There will also be a recreation room and sofas throughout the common area to lounge and relax.

Further amenities include a 24/7 security, a full concierge and a rental program for the owners who want to earn a return on their investment. The concierge service will be helpful to assist the owners in making their 'homecoming' a very pleasant return. Each condo will have one designated parking space exclusive to the owners.

Construction on Oasis at Eagle

Beach is moving fast. Fifteen of the thirty five units have already been sold. The condominiums will be ready for occupancy by March 2010. Oasis is located on Eagle Beach which allows for an easy access, even on foot, to the best casinos, restaurants, golf courses, shopping areas and night life the Aruba has to offer. The experienced sales team of Oasis invites you for a visit to learn about this new gem on the beach.

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Dutch not worried about neo-colonialism charges



THE HAGUE--The Dutch Government doesn't fear accusations of neo-colonialism by leaving too little space for the BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba to manage their own affairs and giving the Kingdom Representative (Rijksvertegenwoordiger) too much power.

Dutch State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten stated this in a letter to the Second Chamber. The governing Christian Democratic Party CDA, of which Bijleveld-Schouten is a member, had questioned giving the Kingdom Representative too much authority, which

the party referred to as "The Hague patronising."

"The impression that the Kingdom Representative gets a heavy role is correct, but this role is not being overdone. A number of responsibilities that the Kingdom Representative gets can be compared with those of the Representative of the Queen (Commissaris van de Koningin) and are the result of not placing the public entities under a province," said the State Secretary.

The decision to give the Kingdom Representative further reaching authority has to do with the "current political culture on the islands and the wish of the Dutch

Government to improve and guarantee good governance in the public entities."

Bijleveld-Schouten however also sees the risks of having a Kingdom Representative on the small islands. "Considering the scale of the islands, the Kingdom Representative will not escape getting involved in local affairs.

It will depend on the person to what extent he will keep the necessary space, just like the Governor. That is why the selection of a candidate for the position of Kingdom Representative will have to be done with utter carefulness."

The State Secretary didn't fear a conflict of the Kingdom Representative with the Lt. Governor because of overlapping tasks.

"There is no overlap in authority. The situation is similar to that of municipalities where next to the mayor, the Provincial Executive (Gedeputeerde Staten) or the Representative of the Queen can inform the minister of decisions that they think should be annulled," she said. Bijleveld-Schouten acknowledged that the approval of decisions to appoint, promote, suspend or

dismiss island civil servants by the Kingdom Representative is a "heavy, but necessary instrument."

"It is general knowledge that political appointments of persons that don't always have the necessary qualifications are a big problem in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba."

According to the State Secretary, the governing power of the islands, in combination with the small scale, is negatively affected by these political appointments which

also don't motivate persons with the right qualifications but who are sidelined for political reasons.

Responding to concerns about great numbers of Dutch civil servants being stationed on the BES islands, Bijleveld-Schouten stated that small departmental units would be placed on the islands in the future.

"These units will execute daily duties. It is not the intention to flood the islands with Dutch civil servants," she said. □

The Hague postpones Bonaire debt payment

THE HAGUE--The Dutch Government has postponed payment of debts of Bonaire's government, State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten announced on Monday.

The decision has to do with the uncertainty that has evolved after the course Bonaire's new Executive Council has taken. Bijleveld-Schouten, through her spokesman on Monday, confirmed statements by Bonaire's leader of government Jopie Abraham that she had stopped payment of NAf. 52 million to pay off debts to general pension fund APNA.

"Bonaire's position is totally unclear, after the new Executive Council seems to have made a fundamentally different choice than we had agreed on earlier," stated Bijleveld-Schouten's spokesperson.

"We have an agreement with Bonaire that it will become part of the Netherlands as a public entity, together with Saba and St. Eustatius. If the Island Government suddenly chooses a free association, it effectively opts for independence," the spokesperson added.

The developments in Bonaire put the entire package of Bonaire as a public entity up for discussion. "It is only logical that the Netherlands puts things on hold until it is clear what Bonaire wants, especially when it concerns large amounts like the debt to APNA," he said, but stressed that all other activities en route to October 10, 2010 would continue.

"The State Secretary wants activities that directly benefit the people, like improvements in education and health care, to continue. The moratorium doesn't include the Regional Service Centre RSC and the Committee for Financial Supervision CFT.

In response to questions posed by Dutch Members of Parliament John Leerdam and Jan Boelhouwer, both of the Labour Party PvdA, Bijleveld-Schouten stated on Monday that it was up to Bonaire's Island Council to hold a referendum.

"But I do point out that it would not be in conformity with agreements if members of government or the Island Council were to put a different option to the people than the one followed in the current process to execute constitutional change," stated Bijleveld-Schouten.

According to the State Secretary, Bonaire's Island Council and members of government committed to the current process. Bonaire's delegation leader Ramoncito Booi had signed the Final Declaration of October 11, 2006, in which it was agreed that Bonaire, Saba and St. Eustatius would become part of the Netherlands as public entities in the sense of Article 134 of the Dutch Constitution. Bonaire's Island Council had unanimously approved the Final Declaration in a meeting on October 17, 2006.

GEBE power plant, generators are on schedule for December

~ Criticism stings personnel ~

CAY BAY--The new GEBE power plant and the two new 11.5 megawatt generators are on schedule to be brought online in December. This will effectively solve the ongoing problems with capacity demands and power outages that have plagued the company, and consequently the public, for most of the year. GEBE's Production Department Chief of Operations Kenrick Chittick provided a detailed briefing on the status of the new plant on Tuesday and assured that it should be fully operational by Christmas.

Some necessary piping is being put in, the fire alarm and smoke detection systems have to be installed and some training exercises performed before the generators are brought online.

In the midst of intense criticism, including the latest comments by Commissioner in charge of Energy Theo Heyliger directed at the GEBE management, the company's personnel are working from 7:00am to 6:00pm, seven days a week, to deliver the much-needed additional

power to St. Maarten.

Commercial Manager Steve Duzanson said that while current criticism stung personnel, they didn't take it personally and looked at it from a constructive point of view. "We understand the frustration from the public. We too are frustrated with the outages and the issues we are currently going through. But by December we will be in a better position when the engines come online," he said.

Chittick explained that the generators would have to go through some commissioning tests before they were put online. This is to ensure that, among many other technical matters, they meet the requirements of manufacturer Wärtsilä and GEBE, and meet required output levels.

One major upgrade associated with the project is the use of an air-cooling or radiator-cooling system for which GEBE's Managing Director William Brooks opted, as opposed to the sea water-cooling system the company now uses. The air-cooling system, which will eliminate

DJ industrials pass 10,000 for 1st time in a year



Specialists Michael Scavone, left, and Michael Sollitto react as the Dow Jones Industrial Average crosses 10,000, on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2009.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

By SARA LEPRO
TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK — The Dow Jones industrial average has reclaimed 10,000 for the first time in a year.

The Dow crossed five figures in afternoon trading Wednesday, seven months after it hit a 12-year low of 6,547.05 on March 9. The comeback by the stock market's best-known indicator is the most visible sign yet that investors believe the economy is indeed recovering from the financial crisis and recession. Cheering erupted from traders on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange as stocks briefly moved above the psychological barrier. The Dow fell back into the 9,990 range in the normal ebb and flow of trading.

"People feel more comfortable and feel like there's less risk

in the market when you get above a psychological point like 10,000," said Carl Beck, a partner at Harris Financial Group.

Upbeat earnings reports from chip maker Intel Corp. and banker JPMorgan Chase & Co. Wednesday gave the Dow its final push past 10,000.

Investors are increasingly shaking off lingering doubts about the economy. However, analysts still warn that problems like rising unemployment and a weak housing market pose a threat to a solid recovery.

The Dow is now up 53 percent from its March low. But it remains 29 percent below its peak of 14,164.53 hit in October 2007.

The index first finished above 10,000 on March 29, 1999, in the midst of a powerful rally that ended with the dot-com

bust at the start of this decade. Stocks then fell below that mark last October as investors sold stocks in a feverish panic following the downfall of Lehman Brothers.

The latest round of earnings reports, which will continue to pour in over the next few weeks, are the key to keeping the market's rally alive, analysts say. If earnings fall short of expectations, stocks could stumble.

JPMorgan Chase, the first major bank to report third-quarter earnings, stoked the market's optimism as it easily beat Wall Street's expectations, reporting a profit of \$3.59 billion for the July-September period.

The bank also achieved record year-to-date revenue.

Investors didn't seem fazed that JPMorgan, considered one of the strongest financial institutions throughout the financial crisis, doubled the amount of money it set aside during the quarter to cover failed home and credit card loans.

"Better-than-expected is a win," said Peter Schwartz, principal at Gregory J. Schwartz & Co. "People's expectations have been calibrated to buffer some of the bad news."

Intel also beat analysts' estimates, reporting a smaller-than-expected drop in profits and sales after the market closed Tuesday. The leading chip maker said it expects

sales in the final period of the year to top projections, raising hopes that the computer market is improving.

Together, the reports quieted fears that major U.S. companies won't be able to boost profits through sales growth and not just massive cost-cutting, which was a main driver behind the improvement in second-quarter results.

The Dow rose 115.02, or 1.2 percent, to 9,986.08 after trading as high as 10,001.58. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 14.11, or 1.3 percent, to 1,087.30, and the Nasdaq composite index rose 24.16, or 1.1 percent, to 2,164.05.

Three stocks rose for every one that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where 328 stocks hit new 52-week highs and only two hit new lows.

Volume on the NYSE came to 689.1 million shares, compared with 591.8 million at the same time on Tuesday.

Investors displayed little reaction to minutes from the Federal Reserve's last meeting that indicated policymakers were conflicted over whether to expand or trim a program intended to drive down mortgage rates and support the housing market.

Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke and his colleagues agreed to slow down the pace of a \$1.25 trillion program to buy mortgage securities from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Instead of wrapping up the

purchases by year-end, the Fed last month said it would do so by the end of March.

The strong results from JPMorgan helped alleviate worries about banks prompted the day before when a prominent analyst downgraded Goldman Sachs Group Inc. JPMorgan rose \$1.43, or 3.1 percent, to \$47.09, its highest level in a year. Intel shares gained 39 cents, or 1.9 percent, to \$20.88.

The ICE Futures U.S. dollar index, which tracks the dollar against other major currencies, fell 0.5 percent, after earlier hitting its lowest point since August 2008.

Oil jumped 78 cents to \$74.93 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, after earlier rising as high as \$75.40.

Bond prices fell as stocks soared. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 3.38 percent from 3.35 percent late Tuesday.

Third-quarter earnings, especially reports from major banks, are the market's focus this week. Goldman Sachs and Citigroup Inc. will report Thursday, followed by Bank of America Corp. on Friday. Stronger bank earnings were a big factor behind the huge stock rally this spring and summer, which pushed the S&P 500 index up 60 percent since hitting a 12-year low in early March. The KBW Bank Index, which tracks 24 of the largest U.S. banks, has risen a massive 143.3 percent since then.

With stocks having run up so much, investors have long been bracing for a significant pullback. But any retreats in stocks have been modest — less than 10 percent — and brief.

The market continues to feed on its own momentum.

"I think what's happened is you had all these people sitting on the sidelines waiting for the correction to come," said Peter Schwartz, principal at Gregory J. Schwartz & Co.

"But as time goes by and we haven't had any major pullbacks, these people sitting on the sidelines are finally pulling the trigger saying, 'I can't wait any longer.'"

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Fed officials were conflicted over revival program

By JEANNINE AVERSA,
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — Amid uncertainties about strength of the budding recovery, Federal Reserve policymakers last month were conflicted over whether to expand or cut back a program intended to drive down mortgage rates and prop up the housing market, according to a document released Wednesday.

In the end, Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke and his colleagues agreed to slow down the pace of a \$1.25 trillion program to buy mortgage securities from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Instead of wrapping up the purchases by the end of this year, the Fed said it would do so by the end of March.

But minutes of the Fed's closed-door deliberations on Sept 22-23, revealed some members thought "an increase" in the mortgage securities buying program could help the economy recover more quickly. Another member believed "a reduction" was warranted because the recovery was showing signs of picking up.

The minutes don't identify speakers by name, but rather seek to provide a more detailed account of the Fed's discussions.

The central bank last month also agreed to slow down purchases of \$200 billion in debt from Fannie and Freddie, although there were no fractured thoughts on that action.

At the same time, the Fed held its key bank lending rate at a record low near zero. It pledged to hold it there for an "extended period" to nurture the recovery. Fed policymakers "judged that the costs of growth turning out to be weaker than anticipated could be relatively high," according to the minutes.

The Fed left open the possibility of expanding or scaling back its programs depending how

economic and financial conditions unfold.

Among the issues on policymakers' minds was how the economy will hold up once government supports — including President Obama's \$787 billion stimulus package of tax cuts and increased government spending — fade.

Fed policymakers "expressed considerable uncertainty about the likely strength of the upturn once those supports were withdrawn or their effects waned," according to the minutes.

The housing market led the country into recession. It needs to get back on stronger footing for the national economy to return to full health. Home sales have firmed, helped by low mortgage rates and an \$8,000 tax credit for first-time home buyers, Fed officials noted. That credit is scheduled to expire at the end of November.

Another concern is how consumers — whose spending accounts for 70 percent of all economic activity — will hold up in the months ahead given job cuts, the loss of wealth from housing and stocks hit by the recession, and hard-to-get credit.

Households still face "considerable headwinds," the minutes said.

Not only are consumers likely to be cautious spenders, but businesses indicated they would be "cautious in hiring and investing even as demand for their products picked up," according to the minutes.

Against this backdrop, "the economic recovery was likely to be quite restrained," and the labor market will log "only a slow improvement," Fed officials believed.

The nation's unemployment rate — now at a 26-year high of 9.8 percent — will drop to 9.25 percent by the end of 2010, the Fed said. It will fall to about 8 percent by the end of 2011. □

Bank regulators: real estate loans biggest concern

By MARCY GORDON,
AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON — Rising losses on commercial real estate loans will continue to hurt U.S. banks in coming months and pose the biggest challenge for many financial institutions and their overseers, regulators said Wednesday.

Real estate loans will continue to be "the most prominent area of risk" for banks over the next several quarters, Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. Chairman Sheila Bair told lawmakers in testimony prepared for a Senate hearing.

With more than 7 million jobs lost in the recession, office space has sat empty and developers have defaulted on their loans. The \$6.2 billion in loans backed by commercial properties that banks wrote off as lost in the past two years will likely grow sharply as more loans come due, Bair said.

Bair and U.S. Comptroller of the Currency John Dugan also disputed accusations by some lawmakers and bankers that regulators have been telling banks to restrain lending in the high-risk climate.

"This is not the case," Bair said in her testimony for the hearing by the Senate Banking subcommittee on financial institutions. "The FDIC provides banks with considerable flexibility in dealing with customer relationships and managing loan portfolios. I can assure you that we do not instruct banks to curtail prudently managed lending activities."

Ninety-eight U.S. banks have failed so far this year, many succumbing under the weight of failed real estate loans. The number of banks on the FDIC's confidential "problem list" jumped to 416 at the end of June from 305 in the first quarter. That's the highest number since June 1994 in the wake of the savings and loan crisis. Experts say as many as 400 more banks could fail in the next couple of years.

"The greatest challenge facing many banks and their supervisors is the continued deterioration in commercial real estate loans," Dugan, whose Treasury Department agency oversees some 1,600 nationally chartered banks, said in his prepared testimony.

Commercial real estate loans and lending for construction and development are a significant focus of federal examiners in the field, the regulators said.

Dugan also stressed the importance for national banks of the continued rising losses on credit cards, with loss and delinquency levels reaching records. Some banks have reduced customers' credit lines or raised interest rates on accounts in response to increased delinquencies and the overall economic climate, he added. □

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The House is on Fire

Katrina vanden Heuvel

The Nation -- It is now clear: our economy is shrinking, unemployment and underemployment are on the rise at nearly 20 percent, and a tsunami of foreclosures continues unabated--what we have on our hands is nothing less than a national emergency.

That's why it's so critical that good thinkers and progressive activists are on top of this, paying attention to the human costs of this Great Recession.

"I consider President Obama to be in the situation of having inherited a burning apartment building," said Lawrence Mishel, president of the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), testifying before Congress. "He proceeded to gather all the available fire trucks and douse the fires in half the floors."

Mishel went on to describe the need now for a strengthened safety net, more fiscal relief to state and local governments to avoid further layoffs, a public service jobs program to benefit local communities, a job creation tax credit for every new hire, and greater spending on infrastructure.

Quicker than the deficit hawks can say "What about the debt?"--consider these smart words from former Labor Secretary Robert Reich. "When one out of six Americans is unemployed or underemployed, this is no time to worry about the debt," he writes. Reich describes how critics once said future generations would be paying for FDR's debt due to Depression and World War II spending. But when the economy recovered and people were working and paying taxes again in the 1950s, "FDR debt had shrunk to almost nothing."

Reich proposes a WPA-style jobs program, with spending "on roads and bridges and schools and parks and everything else we need."

It's clear the jobs situation would be far worse without the administration's recovery package--EPI estimates it is saving or creating between \$200,000 and \$250,000 jobs per month. But as many of us at The Nation, and other progressive voices said at the time, it simply didn't go far enough.

By all accounts the Obama administration is now setting its sights on new measures aimed at job creation. Hopefully it will get Treasury Secretary Geithner and others to spend a little less time working their speed dials to talk to Big Finance CEOs, and more time speaking with hard-working people who can't find work.

As The Nation's lead editorial reads this week, "Except for a military threat, no issue confronting a president is more serious than widespread unemployment. Without movement toward job creation, many Congressional Democrats could find themselves on the unemployment line after the 2010 election." □



Can Obama Rise to Harding's Level?

Mona Charen

Creators Syndicate -- Picture this: It is midnight on Nov. 4, 2009. The previous day's elections in Virginia, New York's 23rd congressional district, and New Jersey have all been won by Republicans. Health reform is stalled. The latest employment numbers are still dismaying. President Obama cannot sleep. He paces the halls of the White House and comes upon a portrait of Warren Harding. Since President Obama is nothing if not a receptacle of received understanding, he would probably snort "Harding! What a disaster he was! Cronyism. Laissez-faire economics. Corruption. Incompetence."

Well, it's true that Teapot Dome and other scandals engulfed the Harding administration in 1923.

And that's pretty much all that popular histories remember about the 29th president. Harding died in office before he could restore his reputation. But if his portrait could talk, it might remind President Obama of a few things he could take to heart.

When Harding took office in 1921, the U.S. economy was in a far worse depression than President Obama inherited. A savage inflation had eroded buying power and unemployment stood at 20 percent. The U.S. had suffered more than 116,000 dead and 205,000 wounded in the war. Additionally, 650,000 mostly young and productive Americans had been killed by the Spanish flu. Between 1920 and 1921, GDP had declined 24 percent from \$91.5 billion to \$69.6 billion. Civil liberties had been trampled under the Wilson administration. Wilson had jailed socialist leader Eugene V. Debs, for example, for opposing the U.S. role in World War I.

"With the exception of Lincoln," wrote The Nation magazine, "probably no president in our national history has taken office with as pressing a burden of unresolved questions."

With advice from Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon, President Harding set about reducing the government's role in the economy. He cut federal spending from the bloated Wilsonian level of \$6.3 billion in 1920 to \$5 billion in 1921, and then to \$3.2 billion in 1922. Federal

taxes were cut from \$6.6 billion in 1920 to \$5.5 billion in 1921 and \$4 billion in 1922. Unlike his Commerce Secretary, Herbert Hoover, an enthusiast of government intervention in the economy who pushed for a Conference on Unemployment, Harding believed that "we need vastly more freedom than we do regulation."

Harding, a Republican, not only pardoned and freed the socialist Eugene Debs, who had been prosecuted by the Democrat Wilson; he invited Debs to the White House.

Within a few months of the Harding economic reform plan passing Congress, the economy began to revive. By 1922, the GDP had jumped to \$74.1 billion and would continue its dramatic rise every year until 1930. Unemployment plunged to 6.7 percent and continued to drop. In 1926, the unemployment rate reached 1.6 percent, a record unmatched in peacetime. The Roaring '20s were on.

President Obama and others of a social Democrat cast of mind tend to remember the '20s only by the way they closed. But that period of prosperity was a remarkable achievement for any nation. As Jim Powell, author of "FDR's Folly," noted (quoting historians Richard Vedder and Lowell Galloway): "The seven years from the autumn of 1922 to the autumn of 1929 were arguably the brightest period in the economic history of the United States.

Virtually all the measures of economic well-being suggested that the economy had reached new heights in terms of prosperity and the achievement of improvements in human welfare.

Real gross national product increased every year, consumer prices were stable (as measured by the consumer price index), real wages rose as a consequence of productivity advance, stock prices tripled. Automobile production in 1929 was almost precisely double the level of 1922. It was in the twenties that Americans bought their first car, their first radio, made their first long-distance telephone call, took their first out-of-state vacation. This was the decade when America entered "the age of mass consumption." □



File - This is August 1967 file photo of singer Al Martino. Martino, who played the Frank Sinatra-type role of Johnny Fontane in 'The Godfather,' died Tuesday afternoon at his childhood home. He was 82. Starting in 1952, Martino was known for hit songs including 'Here in My Heart,' 'Spanish Eyes,' 'Can't Help Falling in Love' and 'Volare.'

(AP Photo, File)

'Godfather' singer Al Martino dies in Pa. at 82

SPRINGFIELD, Pa. — Singer Al Martino, who played the Frank Sinatra-type role of Johnny Fontane in "The Godfather," died Tuesday afternoon at his childhood home. He was 82.

Publicist Sandy Friedman, of the Rogers & Cowan public relations firm, confirmed Martino's death in the Philadelphia suburb of Springfield, in Delaware County, but didn't cite a cause.

Starting in 1952, Martino was known for hit songs including "Here in My Heart," "Spanish Eyes," "Can't Help Falling in Love" and "Volare."

Besides acting in the Marlon Brando classic "The Godfather," Martino sang "I Have But One Heart (O Marenariello)" in the 1972 film. His Fontane character is a singer and occasional actor and is the godson of Brando's Mafia boss character, Don Vito Corleone.

Martino was born in South Philadelphia as Alfred Cini and was a longtime resident of Beverly Hills, Calif.

Philadelphia radio and television personality Jerry Blavat dined with Martino and his wife on Monday night. Blavat told the Philadelphia Daily News that Martino appeared to be in fine shape and that he was shocked when he learned of the singer's death.

"He was the last of the show business legends," said Blavat, who has played Martino's songs on the radio for years. "There's nobody else. The last of the performers. A magnificent voice." □



Art experts find possible new Leonardo drawing

By ROB GILLIES,
Associated Press Writer

TORONTO — A new portrait by Leonardo da Vinci may have been discovered thanks to a centuries-old fingerprint. Peter Paul Biro, a Montreal-based forensic art expert, said that a fingerprint on what was presumed to be a 19th-century German drawing of a young woman has convinced art experts that it's actually a Leonardo.

Canadian-born art collector Peter Silverman bought "Profile of the Bella Principessa" at the Ganz gallery in New York on behalf of an anonymous Swiss collector in 2007 for about \$19,000. New York art dealer Kate Ganz had owned it for about 11 years after buying it at auction for a similar price. One London art dealer now says it could be worth more than \$150 million.

If experts are correct, it will be the first major work by Leonardo to be identified in 100 years.

Ganz doesn't believe it is. "Nothing that I have seen or read in the past two years has changed my mind, I do not believe that this drawing is by Leonardo da Vinci," Ganz told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

She declined to comment further.

Biro said the print of an index or middle finger was found on the artwork and that it matched a fingerprint from Leonardo's "St. Jerome" in the Vatican. Biro examined multispectral images of the drawing taken by the Luminere Technology laboratory in Paris. The lab used a special digital scanner to show successive layers of the work.

"Leonardo used his hands liberally and frequently as part of his painting technique. His fingerprints are found on many of his works," Biro said. "I was able to make use of multispectral images to make a little smudge a very readable fingerprint."

Technical, stylistic and material composition



This undated photo provided Wednesday Oct. 14, 2009 by Lumiere Technology in Paris shows a painting that art experts believe they have identified a new Leonardo da Vinci. Peter Paul Biro, a Montreal-based forensic art expert, said Tuesday that a fingerprint on what was presumed to be a 19th-century German painting of a young woman has convinced art experts that it's actually a da Vinci.

(AP Photo/HO/Lumiere Technology.com)

evidence also point to it being a Leonardo. Biro said there's strong consensus among art experts that it is a Leonardo painting.

"I would say it is priceless. There aren't that many Leonardos in existence," Biro said. He said he had heard that one London dealer felt it could be worth 100 million British pounds (more than \$150 million).

Silverman said his Swiss friend saw it first and told him it didn't look like 19th century artwork. When Silverman took a look at at the Ganz gallery in 2007, he thought it might be a Leonardo, although that seemed far-fetched. He hurriedly bought it for his Swiss friend and then started researching it.

"Of course you say, 'Come on, that's ridiculous. There's no such thing as a da Vinci floating around,'" Silverman

said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press. "I started looking in the areas around da Vinci and all the people who could have possibly done it and through elimination I came back to da Vinci."

Last year, Silverman bumped into Nicholas Turner, a former curator of drawings at the J. Paul Getty Museum and the British Museum. Turner said it was a Leonardo and other leading art experts have backed it up as well.

Silverman said thanks to the fingerprint image at the Luminere Technology laboratory it was confirmed.

"That was icing on the cake," he said.

Silverman describes the Swiss private collector as a very rich man who has promised to buy him "lunch and dinner and caviar for the rest of my life if it ever does get sold." □

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FILE- This Tuesday, July 22, 2008 image taken from Pakistan's Geo TV shows Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, an Egyptian who heads al-Qaida Afghanistan operations, in the eastern Afghan province of Khost. al-Yazid made contact with Najibullah Zazi, a Colorado airport shuttle driver accused last month of plotting to attack New York City, U.S. intelligence officials said Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2009. (AP Photo/Geo TV, file)

AP sources: al-Qaida's Afghan head contacted Zazi

Read Next Page

First pictures of Jaycee Dugard published

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Kidnap victim Jaycee Dugard broke her silence on Wednesday as the first photograph of her as an adult emerged following her release after 18 years as the prisoner of her abductor.

Dugard was at the center of a worldwide media frenzy in August when she was found alive nearly two decades after she was snatched outside her home by convicted rapist Phillip Garrido in South Lake Tahoe in 1991.

Now 29, Dugard has spent the past two months in seclusion with her mother, Terry Probyn, 50, and the two daughters Angel, 15, and Starlit, 11, who were fathered by her alleged kidnapper Garrido.

Continued on Page B3



People magazine cover featuring a photograph of Jaycee Dugard, the California kidnapping survivor on October 26, 2009 in this handout released to Reuters on October 14, 2009.

REUTERS/People Magazine/Handout

Gov't insurance option isn't quietly fading away



Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Ky., center, accompanied by Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz., left, and Sen. Lamar Alexander R-Tenn., points to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada's office on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2009, as he speaks about health care reform legislation.

(AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR,
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Fears about high costs of the health care overhaul and mistrust of insurers are rekindling interest in letting the government sell health insurance as part of the plan. The leading congressional proposal as of Wednesday — a Senate Finance bill that relies on private coverage with no new government plan — could price out some 17 million Americans.

Continued on Page B4



A former Taliban militant holds his heavy machine gun, while posing for the camera during a ceremony in which arms were handed over to the Afghan government in the city of Herat province west of Kabul, Afghanistan, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2009. Around 50 Taliban militants from Herat province handed over their weapons as part of a peace-reconciliation program.

(AP Photo/Fraidoon Pooyaa)

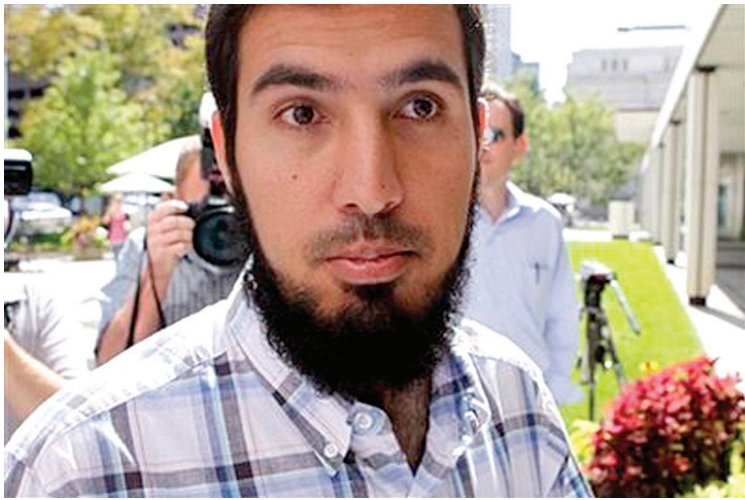
Afghan presidential runoff would face challenges

By HEIDI VOGT,
Associated Press Writer

KABUL — Afghan officials would face a daunting task in organizing a runoff presidential election before the arrival of winter — including hiring unbiased staff and securing polling stations in areas under threat of Taliban attack.

Continued on Page B6

AP sources: al-Qaida's Afghan head contacted Zazi



FILE - In this Sept. 17, 2009 file photo Najibullah Zazi arrives at the federal building for questioning by the FBI in Denver. Zazi is an Afghan immigrant accused of plotting a terrorist attack in New York. Intelligence officials say the terrorist operative who contacted the Afghan immigrant was the head of Afghanistan's al-Qaida operations.

(AP Photo/Ed Andrieski)

By **ADAM GOLDMAN**
BRETT J. BLACKLEDGE,

Associated Press Writers

NEW YORK — The airport shuttle driver accused of plotting a bombing in New York had contacts with al-Qaida that went nearly all the way to the top, to an Osama bin Laden confidant believed to be the terrorist group's leader in Afghanistan, U.S. intelligence officials told The Associated Press.

Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, an Egyptian reputed to be one of the founders of the terrorist

network, used a middleman to contact Afghan immigrant Najibullah Zazi as the 24-year-old man hatched a plot to use homemade backpack bombs, perhaps on the city's mass transit system, the two intelligence officials said.

Intelligence officials declined to discuss the nature of the contact or whether al-Yazid contacted Zazi to offer simple encouragement or help with the bombing plot prosecutors say Zazi was pursuing.

Al-Yazid's contact with Zazi indicates that al-Qaida

leadership took an intense interest in what U.S. officials have called one of the most serious terrorism threats crafted on U.S. soil since the 9/11 attacks. "Zazi working with the al-Qaida core is exceptionally alarming," said Daniel Bynam of the Brookings Institution's Saban Center. "The al-Qaida core is capable of far more effective terrorist attacks than jihadist terrorists acting on their own, and coordination with the core also enables bin Laden to choose the timing to maximize the benefit to his organization." U.S. intelligence officials said earlier that Zazi had contact with an unnamed senior al-Qaida operative. That helped distinguish Zazi from other would-be terrorists who have acted on their own in planning or attempting U.S. attacks.

The officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity because the case remains under investigation, declined to describe al-Yazid's specific interaction with Zazi, who has pleaded not guilty to conspiring to use weapons of mass destruction. But one senior U.S. intelligence official said the contact between Zazi and the senior

al-Qaida leader occurred through an intermediary. Just weeks before U.S. intelligence officials identified Zazi as a possible terrorist threat in late August, John Brennan, President Barack Obama's top domestic terrorism adviser, told a Washington audience that "another attack on the U.S. homeland remains the top priority for the al-Qaida senior leadership." U.S. intelligence officials and prosecutors have said that Zazi was recruited and trained by al-Qaida. They say he and others traveled last year to Pakistan to receive the training. Prosecutors say Zazi, during meetings with federal investigators before his arrest last month, "admitted that he received instructions from al-Qaida operatives on subjects such as weapons and explosives" during his trip to Pakistan. Zazi, who is being held without bond in New York while awaiting trial, has denied receiving al-Qaida training or visiting one of the group's training camps. He said before his arrest that he traveled to Pakistan to see his wife, who lives in Peshawar. In court documents, prosecutors say Zazi is linked to three e-mail accounts that he

used to pursue his bomb plot. Investigators say they found nine pages of handwritten bomb-making instructions when searching two of the e-mail accounts. The notes were sent to the e-mail accounts while Zazi was in Pakistan last year, prosecutors say.

The bomb, which can be made of hydrogen peroxide and flour, is similar to the explosives used by terrorists in the 2005 London subway bombings that killed 52 people.

Prosecutors say Zazi accessed the bomb-making instructions and downloaded them on to his computer after moving to the Denver area in January. In a Colorado hotel suite in early September, Zazi contacted someone "on multiple occasions" for help correcting mixtures of bomb ingredients, "each communication more urgent in tone than the last," court papers say.

Al-Yazid, 53, also known as Abu Saeed al-Masri and Sheikh Said, is a well-known al-Qaida figure who initially disagreed with bin Laden's 9/11 plot, according to the 9/11 Commission Report. Al-Yazid was known at the time of the attack as head of al-Qaida's finance committee. □

Lawyer: Hijacking suspect sought return for years

By **LARRY NEUMEISTER,**
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — A U.S. citizen accused of hijacking a plane from New York to Cuba in 1968 had been trying to return to the United States for years, his lawyer said Wednesday.

The attorney, James Neuman, said outside court that Luis Armando Pena Soltren had approached U.S. authorities in Cuba for several years about returning to the United States before finally arriving on a commercial flight Sunday, when he was arrested.

"He wanted to return here. He wanted to face these charges," Neuman said of his client, who appeared in U.S. District Court in Manhattan for a brief pretrial hearing Wednesday. "I don't know why it took the time it did to arrange the transfer."

Pena Soltren, 66, pleaded not guilty a day earlier to

conspiracy to commit air piracy and kidnapping, interference with flight crew members, aircraft piracy and kidnapping. If convicted, he could face life in prison. Two others who pleaded guilty to lesser charges in the case in the 1970s were sentenced to 15 years or less.

An indictment returned in December 1968 charged Pena Soltren and two others with using pistols and large knives to force the pilots of Pan American Flight 281 to divert their San Juan, Puerto Rico-bound flight from John F. Kennedy International Airport to Havana instead.

The November 1968 flight had 103 passengers and crew aboard.

Neuman said he was not aware of any deals his client might have made with authorities in Cuba or the United States before he arrived at the same

airport where he was accused of boarding the flight 41 years ago.

But he said he had only spoken to Pena Soltren for little more than an hour over two days and most of that time was spent explaining court documents and the law through a translator.

"He's listening to me. He's attentive. He recognizes the gravity of the charges," Neuman said.

The lawyer said Pena Soltren has a wife and four daughters. He said his client had worked in agriculture "in the fields" in Cuba and had a rudimentary understanding of English.

He said he appeared to be fit. "He does not have a history of emotional or physical problems that I'm aware of. I have not asked him his state of mind," he said.

In court Wednesday, Assistant U.S. Attorney Ryan Poscablo



In an artist sketch, Luis Armando Pena Soltren listens during his hearing on hijacking charges at U.S. Federal Court in New York, Tuesday Oct. 13, 2009.

(AP Photos/Elizabeth Williams)

told Judge Alvin K. Hellerstein that the evidence against Pena Soltren includes a letter he wrote, but he did not provide any details. Neuman said he knew nothing about a letter. Poscablo said the active case file had very little in it.

Neuman said the difficulty of developing evidence in a 41-year-old case will "naturally present hurdles for them."

He noted that one defendant in the case had already been acquitted and said he presumed his client was innocent. □

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This undated photo obtained in August 2009 from the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) shows Jaycee Lee Dugard, seen here at age 11, who had been missing since she was kidnapped 18 years ago. The first photograph of kidnap victim Jaycee Dugard since she was found after her 18-year captivity was published by People magazine on its website Wednesday.

(AFP/FBI-HO)

JAYCEE

Continued from Page B1

In a photo for the cover of People magazine's latest issue due out on Friday, a smiling Dugard appears above the headline: "I'm so happy to be back."

The photo of a beaming Dugard bears a strong resemblance to the more familiar image of the 11-year-old abducted schoolgirl that once adorned missing posters. Dugard's formerly blonde hair is now chestnut brown, but her smile and blue eyes remain the same.

In a brief story accompanying the photo, People reported that Dugard has begun a slow process of recovery and has spent her time riding horses, cooking meals and is considering working on a book.

"I'm so happy to be back with my family," Dugard was quoted as saying.

Terry Probyn's step-mother Joan Curry meanwhile revealed: "They live a surprisingly normal life, considering the circumstances."

A spokeswoman for the family, Erika Schulte, told ABC television's "Good Morning America" that Dugard had broken her silence to show the world she was recovering from her ordeal.

"She has such a deep appreciation for this new life

that she's embarking on," Schulte said.

"She did want to thank everyone and really let everyone see how happy she is and how much she's enjoying this and how happy she is to be home."

In a separate interview with CBS television's "Early Show," Schulte spoke of Dugard's delight at being reunited with her family once more.

"She just radiates. I was thrilled when I saw the photo because it was the perfect representation of what she looks like and it speaks to her joy with being with her family now and looking forward to her new life," Schulte said.

"She's a grown-up, she's a mother and a sister and a daughter. And it's amazing to just be in the presence of all of that. "And if you walked into the room and didn't know the circumstances, it would seem, I think, like any other family."

Dugard's two children had also been embraced by the family, Schulte said.

"I don't know what their awareness would be. But they are just so embraced by Terry, Jaycee's mother, and by Shayna, her sister, their new aunt. And they're very much seem to me to be enjoying the life they have now."

Phillip Garrido and his wife Nancy are accused of abducting Dugard and holding her prisoner in a secret compound behind their home in the town of Antioch, east of San Francisco.

Doctor: Burned Fla. teen 'not out of woods yet'

By TAMARA LUSH,
Associated Press Writer

MIAMI — A 15-year-old doused with rubbing alcohol and set on fire after he turned in another teen for trying to steal his father's bicycle is at extremely high risk for organ failure and infection, his doctor said Wednesday.

Michael Brewer was heavily sedated and breathing with a ventilator at Jackson Memorial Ryder Trauma Center and Dr. Nicholas Namias said he is doing as well as can be expected but is not "out of the woods yet."

Brewer's troubles started when 15-year-old Michael Bent gave him a video game and expected him to pay \$40 for it, Broward County Sheriff's Office spokesman Jim Leljedal. Brewer never paid for the game, which authorities would not identify, so Bent tried to steal a \$500 custom bike that belonged to Brewer's father, Leljedal said.

Brewer called authorities over the weekend and Bent was arrested, then released Monday. Brewer refused to attend classes at his middle school that day and instead went to a Deerfield Beach apartment complex to visit a friend. He told deputies that while he was sitting by the swimming pool, he was splashed with rubbing alcohol and set ablaze.

A neighbor heard his screams



Dr. Nicholas Namias, director of the Burn Center, talks to reporters during a news conference at the Ryder Trauma Center of Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2009. Dr. Namias said Wednesday that Michael Brewer was not 'out of the woods yet.' Brewer was hospitalized with burns over three-quarters of his body after the attack at a Deerfield Beach, Fla., apartment complex Monday afternoon. Five teenagers have been charged with aggravated battery.

(AP Photo/Alan Diaz)

for help and put out the flames with a fire extinguisher, said his sister, Malissa Durkee. The teen ripped off his shirt and jumped into the pool, but he was still burned over 65 percent of his body.

Bent and four other teens — 15-year-old Denver Jarvis, Steven Shelton and Jesus Mendez and 13-year-old Jeremy Jarvis — were charged with aggravated battery in the attack. Mendez also was charged with attempted second-degree murder because authorities say he flicked the lighter.

Namias said Brewer's face was not badly burned. But he said the teen suffered burns on his

torso and arms and most of his hair, including his eyelashes, had also been burned off. He is expected to remain hospitalized for several months and is at extremely high risk of infection and organ failure.

"This is a life-changing event," Namias said.

Bent and the Jarvis brothers were in court Tuesday and were ordered held in a juvenile detention center for 21 days. The South Florida Sun Sentinel reported that attorney Stephen Melnick said Jeremy Jarvis was "just there. He was not accused of actually doing it." Attorneys for two others said they were "minimally involved."

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Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nev. speaks about health care reform legislation, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2009, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

(AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

INSURANCE OPTION

Continued from Page B1

And the insurance industry may have unwittingly helped the case for public coverage with a report over the weekend asserting the Finance bill would raise premiums for everyone.

Business groups and conservatives remain steadfastly opposed to government insurance — formidable political opposition that shows no sign of weakening. So advocates are getting creative, trying to reformulate the “public option” in a way that can gain the 60 votes needed to clear

the Senate.

Instead of an all-or-nothing approach, they’re trying to provide choices.

What if each state could decide whether to offer public coverage instead of having it decreed from Washington — as proposed by Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del.?

What if states had a menu of options, from nonprofit co-ops to using their own employee health plans?

What if public coverage were offered only as a backstop in areas where one insurer has a lock on the market?

“We are all talking together, trying to find something that

not everyone will love but the entire (Democratic) caucus will come to agreement on,” said Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., who for months has been seeking a politically viable compromise. “It’s going to be something flexible, but not weak.”

The lone Republican to back healthcare overhaul legislation, Maine Sen. Olympia Snowe, has suggested a possible way out: allowing a public plan to kick in if competition among health insurance companies under a revamped system fails to bring down costs. Snowe is opposed to government insurance as a first-line solution.

What if Snowe’s idea is combined with Carper’s state-by-state approach?

“Those are all elements that one could easily fashion into an outcome that would seem to be elegant,” said economist Len Nichols of the New America Foundation. “It would show the left: ‘Look we will be there when we’re needed if coverage is not affordable.’ And it would show the right that this not some backdoor government takeover, because we’re only going where we’re needed,

either if the states decide or if conditions are such that competition is needed.”

What to do about the public plan is the most politically sensitive issue on the agenda of Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., as he sets out to merge the Finance bill with a Senate health committee version that does include a government option. On Wednesday, top White House aides, including chief of staff Rahm Emanuel and Health Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, traveled to the Capitol to meet with Reid, Democratic Sen. Chris Dodd of Connecticut and Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus, D-Mont., about combining the Finance bill with the Senate health panel measure.

Reid is giving no hints. Asked Wednesday if he thought it was likely there would be a public plan in his merged bill, he responded: “I’m not betting on health care. ‘Likely’ is in a game of craps.”

Republicans say the fix is in for a public plan. Behind the scenes, Democrats will take Baucus’ middle-of-the-road plan and turn it hard to the left, they say.

“We know that the bill written behind closed doors here in the Capitol will be another 1,000-page, trillion-dollar Washington takeover,” said Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky.

Democrats did try one new tack Wednesday, on an issue involving doctors. Senate Democrats are now pushing for quick passage of separate legislation to spare doctors a \$247 billion cut in Medicare fees over a decade. That would raise federal deficits, but the White House says the increase should not count in the price tag for the health care overhaul.

A senior Democratic aide said Reid is focused on what’s politically achievable.

The public option is being assessed in terms of what it would mean for health care overall and, just as importantly, whether it can win approval, said the staff member, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the negotiations.

A drawback of the Finance bill is that its 10-year, \$829 billion budget wouldn’t be enough to guarantee access to affordable health insurance for everyone. People with solid middle-class incomes who buy their own coverage would still have to pay hefty premiums — even after tax credits intended to help them out.

For example, a family of four making \$66,000 a year and headed by a 45-year-old would face \$11,080 in premiums. After a tax credit of \$3,182, the family in the example would still have to come up with \$7,898 — less than a mortgage but probably more than a year’s car payment. The ballpark figures come from the Kaiser Foundation’s Health Reform Subsidy Calculator.

Because there isn’t enough money in the bill for everyone, the Congressional Budget Office projects the Finance bill would leave some 17 million citizens and lawful immigrants without coverage in 2019, when it’s fully phased in. The insurance industry study asserting that the Finance bill would raise premiums for everyone only added fuel to the fire. □

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Chimp owner: Conn. woman was mauled on the job

By JOHN CHRISTOFFERSEN,
Associated Press Writer

NEW HAVEN, Conn. — An attorney representing the owner of a chimpanzee that mauled and blinded a woman is calling the attack a work-related incident and said her family's case should be treated like a workers' compensation claim.

The strategy, if successful, would severely limit potential damages in the case and insulate the chimp owner from personal liability.

The 200-pound chimpanzee named Travis went berserk in February when his owner, Sandra Herold, asked her friend and employee Charla Nash to help lure him back into her house in Stamford. The animal ripped off Nash's hands, nose, lips and eyelids, and she remains in stable condition at the Cleveland Clinic.

Nash's family filed a \$50 million lawsuit against Herold, saying she was negligent and reckless for lacking the ability to control "a wild animal with violent propensities."

But Herold's attorney, Robert Golger, says in recent court papers that Nash was working as an employee of Herold's tow truck company, Desire Me Motors, at the time of the attack. He argues that Travis was an integral part of the business, saying his picture was on the wrecker, he appeared at the garage daily and he attended numerous promotional events.

The house where the attack occurred is a business office of the company, Golger said. Nash fed Travis, cleaned his play area and purchased his

supplies as an employee, Golger contends.

"It's an unfortunate and tragic accident that happened in the workplace and should be subject to the provisions of the Connecticut workers' compensation statutes," Golger said Wednesday.

Matt Newman, attorney for Nash's family, said he disagrees with the argument but declined further comment. Under workers' compensation, Nash would have her medical bills paid for by the employer's insurance and would receive partial wage replacement, but would not get any money for pain and suffering that makes up a large part of jury awards in civil cases. Workers typically receive 65 to 75 percent of their wages.

"It's a steady smaller income that would be enormously dwarfed by a successful civil suit," John Mastropietro, chairman of the Connecticut Workers Compensation Commission, said Wednesday.

Paul Slager, an attorney in Stamford not involved in the case, says Golger is making "a pretty creative argument."

To win the argument, Herold will need to prove there was an employer-employee relationship and that Nash's injuries were work-related.

Nathan Shafner, a workers' compensation attorney in Connecticut, called the tactic "a very sellable argument" and thinks it could prevail.

The strategy leaves Nash's side in a quandary because they only have one year to file a workers' compensation claim, Shafner said. If they fail to file that claim and lose the civil case, they could be

left with no remedy, he said. The 14-year-old chimp was shot and killed by police when he tried to attack a police officer responding to the assault on Nash. □

FILE - This Oct. 20, 2003 file photo shows Travis, a 10-year-old chimpanzee, sitting in the corner of his playroom at the home of Sandra and Jerome Herold in Stamford, Conn. An attorney for Sandra Herold is arguing that Travis's Feb. 2009 attack on an employee of Herold's tow truck company should be treated like a workers' compensation claim.

(AP Photo/The Stamford Advocate, Kathleen O'Rourke, File)



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Heavy and light weapons belonging to former Taliban militants are displayed during a ceremony in which the arms were handed over to the Afghan government in the city of Herat province west of Kabul, Afghanistan, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2009. Around 50 Taliban militants from Herat province handed over their weapons as part of a peace-reconciliation program.

(AP Photo/Fraidoon Pooyaa)

AFGHAN CHALLENGES Continued from Page B1

The problems are unlikely to end there. Even if the Afghans were to pull it off, there's no guarantee that another ballot — which seems increasingly probable — would produce a reliable partner for the U.S. and its allies in confronting

the Taliban-led insurgency. Election officials are expected to rule within days on fraud allegations over the Aug. 20 election.

The vote was marred by charges of ballot-stuffing and voter coercion, mostly to the benefit of the incumbent, President Hamid Karzai.

Preliminary results show Karzai won with about 54 percent. But if the U.N.-backed Electoral Complaints Commission discards enough of the votes for Karzai, it could drop the president's total below 50 percent. That would force a runoff with the top challenger, Abdullah Abdullah.

The electoral tumult already has thrown the country into a political crisis and cast doubt on a key pillar of the NATO strategy in Afghanistan — partnering with a legitimate Afghan government capable of winning broad public support against the Taliban and its al-Qaida allies.

President Barack Obama is trying to decide whether to send in tens of thousands more U.S. troops and whether it is worth backing a government that has lost much of its legitimacy through corruption and alleged electoral fraud.

If the commission announces that Karzai does not have enough votes for a first-round

win, Afghan law requires a runoff within two weeks. Election officials say it will take that long to prepare for a new vote.

That would push the balloting into early November — just ahead of the advent of winter, which usually begins in most of the country in the second half of the month.

In the far northern province of Badakhshan, snow already has fallen. Deputy Gov. Shamsul Rahman said a snowstorm about two weeks ago closed many remote roads.

Once the first snows fall across the rest of the country, it will be difficult to transport ballots to and from Kabul over Afghanistan's primitive road system, especially through mountain passes that rise as high as 10,000 feet. Many rural Afghans would probably stay at home rather than travel to polling stations in the fierce cold.

"It's hard in cold weather to come by donkey or foot," said

Mohammad Nader Fahimi, the deputy governor of central Bamiyan province.

With a possible runoff looming, election officials have gathered materials including ballots, indelible ink and counting sheets in the capital so they can be distributed to the provinces on short notice.

Distributing ballots is only one of the problems facing Afghan authorities.

"Challenges remain, including hiring and training polling center staff and making sure people complicit in first-round vote fraud are not rehired," said Timothy Michael Carney, a retired U.S. ambassador who runs the U.S. election support team. "And of course the important aspect of ensuring security for a possible second round."

The Independent Election Commission, the Afghan body that runs elections, must also complete the list of polling stations. □



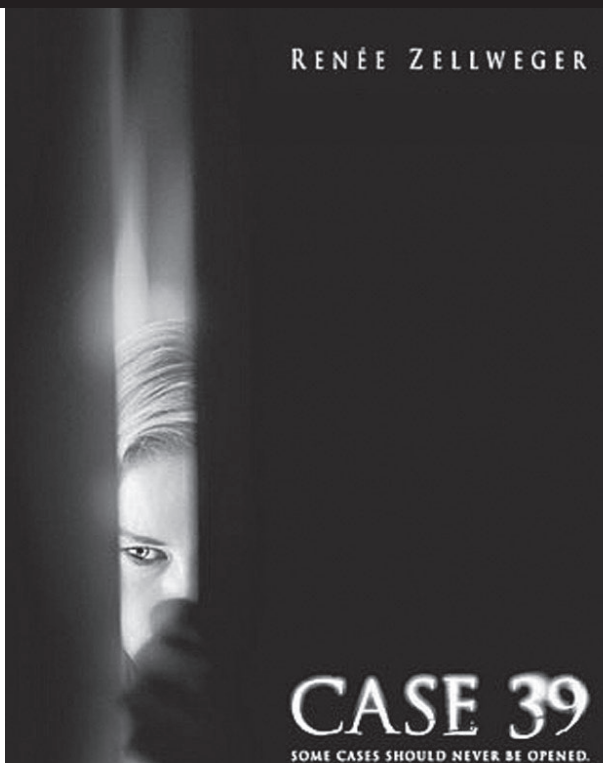
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	daily: 1:15	3:45	late show: 11:00	
R	SORORITY ROW	6:30	8:45	
	daily: 4:15		late show: 11:00	
	matinee: 1:45			
PG	SUSKE & WISKE	5:00		
	daily: 12:45	3:00	late show:	
PG	FAME	4:30	6:45	
	daily: 12:00	2:15	9:00	11:15
	matinee:		late show:	
R	FINAL DESTINATION 4		8:00	10:00
	daily: 12:00		12:00	
R	JENNIFER'S BODY	5:30	7:45	10:00
	daily: 1:00	3:15	late show: 12:15	
PG	TOY STORY 3D	4:00	6:00	
	daily: 12:00	2:00	late show:	
R	THE INFORMANT	7:00	9:30	12:00
	daily: 12:00		late show:	
	matinee:			
AT PASEO HERENCIA				
R	THE STEPFATHER	6:00	8:30	NEW
	daily: 12:45	3:15	late show: 11:15	
PG-13	SURROGATES	4:15	6:30	8:45
	daily: 1:45		late show: 11:15	
PG	TOY STORY 3D	4:15	6:15	
	daily: 12:15	2:15	late show:	
PG-13	TYLER PERRY'S I CAN DO BAD ALL BY MYSELF	8:30		
	daily: 12:00		late show: 11:00	
R	ZOMBIELAND	4:00	6:00	8:00
	daily: 12:00	2:00	late show: 12:00	
PG-13	G.I.: JOE: THE RISE OF THE COBRA	6:00		
	daily: 1:00	3:30	late show:	
R	FINAL DESTINATION 4	8:15	10:15	
	daily: 12:00		late show: 12:15	
R	WHITEOUT	5:15	7:30	9:45
	daily: 12:45	3:00	late show: 12:00	

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Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin meets with Chinese President Hu Jintao at Diaoyutai State Guest house in Beijing. Putin said here Wednesday that it was “too early” to discuss sanctions against Iran over its disputed nuclear programme.

(AFP/POOL/Kota Kyogoku)

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV,

Associated Press Writer

BEIJING — Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin criticized talk of sanctions against Iran on Wednesday, undermining U.S. efforts to present a united front against Tehran’s nuclear program at a crucial moment.

Putin’s comments in China came a day after Russia’s foreign minister, at Hillary Rodham Clinton’s side in Moscow, said threatening sanctions was “counterproductive.”

Russia’s growing hostility to even discussing sanctions comes shortly after President Barack Obama canceled plans to build a missile defense shield in Europe. That was seen by some as a

Putin: Iran sanctions talk premature

concession to Russia in hopes of persuading it to put more pressure on Iran to open its nuclear program for inspection.

The U.S. and a number of other countries contend the program is meant to develop nuclear weapons.

“If we speak about some kind of sanctions now, before we take concrete steps, we will fail to create favorable conditions for negotiations,” Putin said. “That is why we consider such talk premature.”

Putin’s words served as a parting shot at the U.S. Secretary of State, who wound up a two-day visit to Russia as part of an effort to mend relations. She came to Moscow seeking solidarity for a firm warning to Iran of the consequences of refusing to stop enriching uranium and come clean about its nuclear activities.

Speaking to reporters shortly returning home from Beijing, Putin sounded less cooperative on Iran than President Dmitry Medvedev, who said after a meeting with Obama in New York last month that sanctions are sometimes inevitable.

Eversince, Russian officials have been backtracking from that remark, at least in public, while insisting they are not.

They have by no means ruled out sanctions. But Medvedev did not mention the word at a news conference in Pittsburgh two days later, and now both Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Putin have emphasized that the focus, for the time being, must be on diplomacy.

“We must hold negotiations and search for compromises. If they are not found, then we will see what happens next,” Putin said. He said that, if talks “fail to take place or end in a fiasco, then we could talk about further steps.”

Putin said there was no contradiction between his statements on the issue and Medvedev’s. Lavrov said the same thing Tuesday, explaining that Medvedev’s statement about sanctions last

month meant that penalties would be considered only when all political and diplomatic efforts are exhausted.

But the shifting tone seems to have frustrated the United States, which believes it is critical to get tangible support from Moscow for at least considering new sanctions to make international pressure more likely to work.

Putin made it clear Russia disagrees.

“We believe that we should treat this issue with caution, and there is no need to scare the Iranians,” he said.

Russia has walked a fine line on Iran for years. It is one of the six powers leading efforts to ensure Iran does not develop an atomic bomb. But it has close ties with Iran, a regional power close to Russia’s vulnerable southern flank, and it is building the country’s first nuclear power plant.

Along with China, Russia has used its clout as a veto-wielding U.N. Security Council member to water down previous sanctions against Iran. In contrast with the United States, Russian officials have repeatedly said they see no evidence Iran is seeking nuclear weapons.

Putin repeated that last month, and warned against the use of sanctions or force.

Since then, Iran has disclosed a previously secret uranium enrichment site. And Russian-American ties improved after Obama dropped plans to base missile defense facilities in Poland and the Czech Republic.

In the U.S. trip last month, Medvedev said the revelation of the enrichment site near the holy city of Qom raised “serious concerns” and urged Iran to prove its nuclear program is peaceful. In China on Wednesday, Putin had what for him amounts to enthusiastic praise for the shift in missile defense, saying Russia is “completely satisfied with that decision” and that its leadership “has reacted with understanding and gratitude.” □

Government says 85,000 Iraqis killed in 2004-08

By SINAN SALAHEDDIN,
Associated Press Writer
BAGHDAD – At least 85,000 Iraqis lost their lives from 2004-2008 in violence, the government said in its first comprehensive official tally released since the war began. The report by the Human Rights Ministry said 85,694 people were killed from the beginning of 2004 to Oct. 31, 2008 and 147,195 were wounded. It counted Iraqi civilians, military and police but did not cover U.S. military deaths, insurgents, or foreigners, including contractors or U.S. forces. And it did not include the first months of the war after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. The Associated Press reported in April that the government had recorded 87,215 Iraqi deaths from 2005 to February 2009, a toll very similar to the latest release. It was based on government statistics obtained by the AP and covered violence ranging from catastrophic bombings to execution-style slayings. Until the AP report, the government's toll of Iraqi deaths had been one of the most closely guarded secrets of the war. It has been hotly

disputed because of the high political stakes in a war opposed by many countries and by a large portion of the American public. Critics on each side accuse the other of manipulating the toll to sway public opinion. The ministry's report came out late Tuesday as part of a larger study on human rights in the country. It described the years that followed the invasion, which toppled Saddam Hussein's regime, as extremely violent. "Through the terrorist attacks like explosions, assassinations, kidnappings and forced displacements, the outlawed groups have created these terrible figures which represent a big challenge for the rule of law and for the Iraqi people," it said. Violence has declined dramatically since the worst years, but almost every person in Iraq has been touched by the violence. Insurgents continue to target civilians, especially Shiites and their shrines. Iraq's death toll continued to climb on Wednesday when three near simultaneous blasts struck the southern Shiite holy city of Karbala. At least six people were killed, Iraqi

police and medical officials said. The ministry's report said 1,279 children and 2,334 women were killed in the five-year period covered. It said 263 university professors, 21 judges, 95 lawyers and 269 journalists were killed, singling out some of the professions which were specifically targeted as the country descended into chaos. According to the report, 2006 was the deadliest year with 32,622 killed or found dead. The toll for 2004 was 11,313, rising to 15,817 the next year. The second deadliest year in the period covered was 2007 with 19,155 killed or found dead. The toll fell to 6,787 in 2008, the lowest yearly count for the period. The toll also included 15,000 unidentified bodies not claimed by families and buried in special cemeteries. At least 10,000 people were also listed as missing. But Human Rights Ministry official Kamail Amin said it was not known whether there was overlap between the missing and unidentified counts. As Iraq became increasingly violent following the 2003 invasion, it also became increasingly difficult to independently track death figures. Statistics from the initial months of the war have been extremely difficult to obtain as there was no functioning Iraqi government during that time and the interim government was not seated until mid-2004. The difficulties of quantifying the loss were compounded by the fact that records were not always compiled centrally, and the brutal insurgency sharply limited on-the-scene reporting. The U.S. military never shared its data. "The situation was chaotic and there was an absence of government institutions. The whole country was in total anarchy," Amin said, referring to 2003. The number obtained by the AP was a minimum count of violent deaths. The official who provided the data to the AP estimated the actual number of deaths was 10 to



Iraqi security forces inspect weapons seized by Iraqi security forces during recent security operations north of Baghdad, Iraq, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2009.

(AP Photo/Karim Kadim)

20 percent higher because thousands are still missing and civilians were buried in the chaos of war without official records. Combined with tallies based on hospital sources and media reports since the beginning of the war and an in-depth review of available evidence by the AP, the figures showed that more than 110,600 Iraqis had died in violence since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion and up through early 2009. The most recent numbers from Iraq Body Count, a private London-based group that has tracked civilian casualties since the war began, puts the number of civilian casualties as of Oct. 14 at 93,540. The toll released Tuesday was based on death certificates issued by the Health Ministry. The tolls measure only violent deaths — people killed in attacks such as the shootings, bombings, mortar attacks and beheadings that have ravaged Iraq. They exclude indirect factors such as damage to infrastructure, health care and stress that caused thousands more to die. Some experts favor cluster surveys, in which conclusions are drawn from a select sampling of households. The largest cluster survey in Iraq was conducted in 2007 by the

World Health Organization and the Iraqi government. It concluded that about 151,000 Iraqis had died from violence in the 2003-05 period, but that included insurgents.

A more controversial cluster study conducted between May and July 2006 by Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and Al-Mustansiriya University in Baghdad, published in the Lancet medical journal, estimated that 601,027 Iraqis had died due to violence. The authors said roughly 50,000 more died from nonviolent causes such as heart disease and cancer because of deteriorating health conditions caused by the war. Critics argue that such surveys are flawed in Iraq because the security situation prevents a proper sampling. They also have margins of error that could skew the numbers by the tens of thousands.

While the Pentagon maintains meticulous records of the number of American troops killed — at least 4,349 as of Wednesday — it does not publicly release comprehensive Iraqi casualty figures. American units around the country do compile figures, drawing them mostly from the Iraqi military. They are not released publicly but are used to determine trends.

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Minister for Trade and Investment Gareth Thomas, seen here in January 2009, warned after talks in Sudan on Wednesday that persistent differences between the country's civil war foes threaten to further delay long-promised elections.

(AFP/File/Roslan Rahman)

London warns north-south row threatens Sudan elections

KHARTOUM (AFP) – London warned after talks in Sudan on Wednesday that persistent differences between the country's civil war foes threaten to further delay long-promised elections.

The planned elections have already been twice postponed amid differences between the Khartoum government and the southern former rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) over a planned census and a new electoral law.

"There has got to be agreement; people have got to sit down and reach a conclusion in order for Sudanese people to be able to participate in genuinely free and fair elections," said Minister of State for International Development Gareth Thomas.

"The political parties do need to resolve their differences on the implementation of the census ... and agreements that need to be reached in advance for the election to take place," he added.

Britain is the former colonial power in Sudan. Thomas, who was to head to south Sudan on Thursday for talks with SPLM officials, is the first British minister to visit since July 2008. Sudan's relations with the West deteriorated sharply in March after the International Criminal Court issued a warrant for the arrest of President Omar al-Beshir for alleged war crimes in Darfur.

Thomas also spoke out against a spate of kidnappings of aid workers and UN staff in the western Sudanese region since March.

Two staff of the Irish aid agency Goal remain in captivity more than 100 days after being abducted, while two civilian staff of the joint UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) have been held since late August.

"We have got to end the culture of impunity," Thomas said. "The rhetoric has been changing and that is encouraging, and we need so see that continue. We need to see the government take all the steps it can to crack down on kidnappers." □

USGS reports 6.0 magnitude earthquake off tsunami-hit Samoa

WELLINGTON (AFP) – An earthquake of magnitude 6.0 struck off the South Pacific island nation of Samoa on Thursday, seismologists reported, two weeks after a violent quake caused a tsunami that devastated Tonga, Samoa and American Samoa. No immediate tsunami alert was issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii following the quake, which struck at 6:00 am (1800 GMT Wednesday) at a narrow depth of 10 kilometres (six miles).

The epicentre was 365 kilometres southwest the Samoan capital of Apia, the US Geological Survey said. Samoa was devastated by huge waves that struck on September 29 after an 8.0 magnitude earthquake smashed into the southern coast of the most populated island of Upolu.

Nearly 150 people were killed in Samoa while another 32 were confirmed dead in neighbouring American Samoa and nine on Tonga's northern island of



The Litia Sini Beach Resort lies in ruins in the tsunami devastated village of Lalomanu in Samoa on October 5, after being battered by a tsunami. An earthquake of magnitude 6.0 struck off the South Pacific island nation of Samoa on Thursday, seismologists reported, two weeks after a violent quake caused a tsunami that devastated Tonga, Samoa and American Samoa.

(AFP/File/Torsten Blackwood)

Niutoputapu.

Samoans relived the terror on October 8 when a 7.8 earthquake near Vanuatu -- followed in quick succession by two more tremors over 7.0 -- sparked a Pacific-wide tsunami alert.

Panicking residents caused

traffic gridlock in the capital Apia and homeless survivors from September's tsunami fled their makeshift hill camps to run higher up the slopes.

A second tsunami was not generated but the alert inflamed emotions still raw from a week earlier.



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Clayton Kershaw to lead Dodgers into NLCS



LOS ANGELES -- Dodgers manager Joe Torre planned to skip Randy Wolf and pitch Clayton Kershaw if a Game 5 was necessary in the National League Division Series, so it was no surprise that Torre on Wednesday named Kershaw to start Game 1 of the NL Championship Series that opens Thursday against Philadelphia.

Just 21, Kershaw dueled St. Louis' Adam Wainwright to a no-decision when the Dodgers won Game 2, 3-2, in a ninth-inning miracle last week. Kershaw pitched 6 2/3 innings, allowing two runs on nine hits, striking out four with command good enough to allow no walks (except one intentionally). He will be pitching with one week of rest.

Kershaw was 0-2 with a 5.23 ERA against the Phillies this year and is 0-3 with a 6.64 ERA in his career. Both losses this year came by early June, before Kershaw turned around his season with a 2.56 ERA over his final 10 starts.

Those who believe in the theory that October

games are won by hard-throwers, Kershaw fits that better than Wolf, who started Game 1 against the Cards. While Vicente Padilla shut down a demoralized Cardinals club in Game 3, Kershaw is the one Dodgers starter with the ability to dominate an opposing lineup, especially one loaded with left-handed sluggers like the Phillies.

For proof, Kershaw finished the regular season with a league-leading .200 opponents batting average and .173 against left-handers, allowing only one home run to a lefty (Brad Hawpe) in 139 at-bats. Kershaw allowed seven home runs this year, four homers in four April starts and only three homers in the 27 starts since.

He has had career success against Philadelphia first baseman Ryan Howard (1-for-8 with three RBIs) and outfielder Shane Victorino (1-for-8), but Chase Utley (3-for-10 with a home run) and Raul Ibanez (2-for-5 with two doubles and three RBIs) have given him trouble. □

Angels will start Lackey in Game 1, Saunders in Game 2



ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) -- Angels manager Mike Scioscia announced his rotation for the AL championship series on Wednesday, selecting John Lackey to start Friday night's Game 1 against CC Sabathia and the New York Yankees. Lackey pitched 7 1-3 innings to lead Los Angeles to a 5-0 win over the Boston Red Sox in Game 1 of the division

series. He is 3-3 with a 3.02 ERA in 12 career postseason games, 10 starts. "It's a fun atmosphere, for sure," Lackey said. "It's the same as the last round. It helps to win the first game, but the importance is probably a little bit less in a seven-game series, especially being on the road. It'll be a challenge the whole series. They're a great team."

Lackey was 11-8 with a 3.83 ERA after missing the first 33 games because of a forearm strain.

He got Los Angeles off to a great start in the first round of the playoffs, allowing just four singles against Boston.

"When John is on that mound, he competes as well as anybody I've seen," Scioscia said of the eight-year veteran, who won Game 7 of the 2002 World Series as a rookie.

Lackey was 3-3 with a 3.76 ERA at the old Yankee Stadium and has yet to pitch in the new park -- which is much more conducive to home runs. The right-hander gave up 23 in his 32 starts this season.

Left-hander Joe Saunders will start Game 2 against A.J. Burnett on Saturday. Jered Weaver, the Angels' Game 2 pitcher in their sweep of the Red Sox, will face Andy Pettitte when the series shifts to Anaheim on Monday for Game 3.

Saunders will be making his second postseason start. He



allowed four runs over 4 2-3 innings in the Angels' 5-4 victory at Boston in Game 3 of last year's division series.

Scott Kazmir, acquired Aug. 28 from Tampa Bay, will start Game 4 in Anaheim -- most likely against Sabathia. □

Wrestler, personality Captain Lou Albano dies at 76

NEW YORK - Legendary wrestling figure Captain Lou Albano, perhaps best known for his association with pop singer Cyndi Lauper, died Wednesday, according to World Wrestling Entertainment. Albano, 76, was "one of the company's most popular and

charismatic legends," the company said in a statement. The cause of death was not immediately disclosed. "Albano began his storied career with Vincent J. McMahon in the 1960s as one half of 'The Sicilians' tag team with his partner Tony

Altimore," the WWE said. "He will be greatly missed by the WWE and his fans." Albano, who was with the WWE from 1983 to 1996, was inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame in 1996. He started as a tag team wrestler in the 1950s but

Wanjiru of Kenya wins Chicago Marathon



CHICAGO (AP) -- Smiling and waving, Sammy Wanjiru of Kenya was already celebrating his victory in the Chicago Marathon as he approached the finish line. He had no idea \$100,000 was still hanging in the balance.

Wanjiru won the marathon with the fastest time on American soil, finishing in 2 hours, 5 minutes, 41 seconds, and collected a big bonus check on a bone-chilling Sunday morning.

With temperatures in the low-to mid-30s, Wanjiru turned in the best time in the U.S. and beat by one second the mark set by Khalid Khannouchi in Chicago in 1999. He got \$75,000 for winning and \$100,000 for the course record, although he nearly cost himself the bonus by waving to the crowd as he approached the finish.

"I was very happy to see I'm

the winner," Wanjiru said. "I was very happy. I was very happy to take \$100,000 by one second."

He had no idea how close he was to the course record as he headed north up Columbus Drive to the finish line, and he wouldn't have been in such a great mood had that celebration cost him a big bonus. It didn't, so he could smile about it.

Abderrahim Goumri of Morocco made a late push to finish second in 2:06:04, with Kenya's Vincent Kipruto in third (2:06:08).

Russia's Liliya Shobukhova, who finished third at the London Marathon earlier this year, was a winner in her second marathon and finished all alone in 2:25:56. London winner Irina Mikitenko of Germany (2:26:31) finished second to clinch the 2008-09 World Marathon Majors championship, and defending champion Lidiya Grigoryeva of Russia was third (2:26:47). American Deena Kastor, the Chicago winner in 2005, placed sixth (2:28:50) in her first marathon since breaking her right foot in the Beijing Olympics. □



became a successful manager of champion wrestlers in the 1970s, according to a biography on the WWE Web site.

Albano was recognizable by his penchant for unbuttoned Hawaiian shirts and a trademark beard, which was usually bound by a rubber band.

His persona earned him the distinction of "one of the most hated men" in wrestling for 15 years, the WWE biography said.

Albano's image evolved in

the 1980s, when he teamed with Lauper on several music videos, such as "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," and wrestling appearances.

As his celebrity status grew, Albano landed acting jobs, including a role on several episodes of the "Miami Vice" TV series, the biography said. Albano became a cartoon in 1989, when he was the voice of Mario "Jumpman" Mario for 17 episodes of "The Super Mario Bros. Super Show!" according to the Internet Movie Database. □



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Del Potro retires from Shanghai match with wrist tendinitis

SHANGHAI (AP) -- U.S. Open champion Juan Martin del Potro retired because of right wrist tendinitis while trailing Jurgen Melzer of Austria 7-5, 2-1 Wednesday at the Shanghai Masters.

The third-seeded Argentine, who was shaking his right hand before packing up his rackets, said that he had similar wrist tendinitis this year.

"I'm a little sorry," Del Potro said. "It's a big tournament here in Shanghai, very important for me. But if I want to have a good finish this season, I have to recover, go home to be in good shape for the last tournaments."

Del Potro has already qualified for next month's season-ending ATP tournament in London.

Top-seeded Rafael Nadal and second-seeded Novak Djokovic also advanced. Nadal defeated James Blake 6-2, 6-7 (4), 6-4 -- the second straight week in which the Spaniard needed three sets to defeat the American.

"Every match is important for me now," Nadal said. "I had the match under control, set and a break, playing really well, that's true. I think I deserve to win the match, because most of the time, I think I played better than James."

Last week, Nadal beat Blake 7-5, 6-7 (4), 6-3 in the second round of the China Open.

Djokovic reached the third round by beating Fabio Fognini of Italy 6-3, 6-1.

"First matches are always the ones which are trickiest, especially if you're playing against a lower-ranked player who



has basically nothing to lose," said Djokovic, who is coming off a win in Beijing last week.

Besides Del Potro, 15th-seeded Tommy Haas of Germany also retired from his match. Haas lost the first set to German qualifier Rainer Schuettler 6-4 and retired with a right shoulder injury.

On Tuesday, fourth-seeded Andy Roddick retired from his match against Stanislas Wawrinka of Switzerland with a left knee injury. □

Minar receives 8-month doping ban

LONDON (AP) -- Czech player Ivo Minar was banned for eight months on Wednesday after testing positive for a banned substance following a Davis Cup match.

A sample taken after the Davis Cup quarterfinal against Argentina on July 11 contained the banned stimulant methylhexanamine, the International Tennis

Federation said.

The 25-year-old Minar claimed he had taken a food supplement that contained the substance and did not intend to cheat.

The ITF said the ban will end on March 10, 2010, and ruled that Minar's results this year from tournaments in Stuttgart, Hamburg and Gstaad should be disqualified.

"The ITF accepted Mr. Minar's account of the background to his positive test," the federation said in a statement. "Under the Tennis Anti-Doping Program, however, it is a player's strict personal duty to ensure that no prohibited substance enters his or her body, whether as an ingredient in a nutritional supplement or otherwise."

Czech tennis federation



president Ivo Kaderka said Minar has no plans to appeal the ban, in order to avoid being hit with a longer ban.

"I don't agree with a punishment for someone who has not been doping, but just purchased a food supplement which was supposed to be a drug-free," Kaderka told The Associated Press. "That's a problem for me." □

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Honduras: Alcanzan consenso sobre retorno de Zelaya

TEGUCIGALPA (AP) -

Los equipos negociadores que buscan una salida a la crisis política en Honduras alcanzaron el miércoles un acuerdo sobre el punto que se refiere a la reinstalación del presidente depuesto Manuel Zelaya.

No divulgaron el contenido del texto de consenso, que fue sometido a la consideración del mandatario derrocado el 28 de junio y del presidente de facto Roberto Micheletti.

“Hemos logrado consenso sobre un texto único en el punto seis (que implica la vuelta de Zelaya al poder)... no puedo hablar del contenido del texto porque si incumplo el compromiso podría incomodar a la otra parte”, dijo en conferencia de prensa el miércoles Víctor Meza, uno de los negociadores por parte



Un policía antidisturbios hace guardia cerca de la embajada Brasileña en Honduras, donde se encuentra refugiado el depuesto presidente Manuel Zelaya. Tegucigalpa, miércoles 14 de octubre de 2009. (AP Photo/Arnulfo Franco).

Dominicana crea 37 nuevas áreas protegidas

SANTO DOMINGO (AP) - El gobierno dominicano creó 37 nuevas áreas protegidas que pasan a formar parte del patrimonio natural del país caribeño.

El poder ejecutivo elevó a la categoría de áreas protegidas a varios parques y monumentos naturales, reservas biológicas y científicas, santuarios marinos y refugios de vida silvestre, informó el miércoles en un comunicado el ministerio de Medio Ambiente.

El decreto también dispone la realización de un inventario nacional de varios humedales y crea una franja de protección de 250 metros alrededor del vaso de todas las presas de la nación.

“La medida busca garantizar la conservación del patrimonio natural y cultural de la nación, la estabilidad de su sistema ecológico, la protección de las cuencas hidrográficas, la producción de agua, la prevención de desastres naturales y moderación del cambio climático”, indicó el comunicado.

Las nuevas zonas se suman a otras 12 que ya existen, entre lagos, reservas, parques y saltos de agua. Los ambientalistas suelen denunciar un deterioro ecológico creciente y que la mayoría de las especies del bosque seco fueron extraídas en las últimas décadas para fines comerciales (leña o carbón), mientras igual riesgo padece el bosque húmedo, hábitat natural de las especies de flora y fauna y regulador del clima. República Dominicana ocupa 48,442 kilómetros cuadrados, las dos terceras partes de la isla Española, que comparte con Haití. □



de Zelaya.

Meza reiteró que no divulgará si el texto consensuado incluye o no la restitución de Zelaya.

“Ahora mismo me dirijo a la embajada de Brasil (donde está refugiado Zelaya desde el 21 de septiembre)... esperamos tener una respuesta en la

tarde”, añadió.

Las comisiones negociadoras se reúnen desde la semana pasada en busca de una salida a la crisis y aseguran haber encontrado acuerdos en todos los puntos del pacto. Esos puntos incluyen uno en que las partes renuncian a una

amnistía y otro en el que Zelaya desiste de su intención de promover una constituyente, ya quedaron firmados. “En ningún momento fue solicitada una amnistía, el presidente Zelaya no la estima necesaria y la otra parte tampoco”, dijo Mayra Mejía, una de las negociadoras por parte de Zelaya. Añadió que ese punto queda sujeto a que el estado hondureño pueda garantizar procesos judiciales imparciales, “que hasta ahora no lo hemos visto”.

En la víspera, Vilma Morales, vocera del grupo negociador del gobierno de facto dijo que “la Constituyente es un tema ya se discutió y está suscrito por ambas partes”.

Zelaya advirtió recientemente que el 15 de octubre es la fecha límite para concluir las negociaciones. El Frente Nacional de Resistencia contra el Golpe de Estado anunció el martes en un comunicado de prensa que si no hay una solución para la fecha fijada, comenzará acciones para desconocer las elecciones del 29 de noviembre. □

Gobierno venezolano toma control de Hotel Margarita Hilton

CARACAS (AP) - El gobierno comenzó la toma de las instalaciones del Complejo Hotelero Margarita Hilton & Suites tras su adquisición mediante decreto firmado por el del presidente Hugo Chávez al vencer la concesión de 20 años, informó el miércoles el ministro de Turismo, Pedro Morejón.

El mandatario venezolano promulgó el decreto el viernes invocando razones de utilidad pública y social. “El 13 de octubre venció la concesión de la cadena Hilton... lo que si está aclaro... es que nosotros no hemos hecho ninguna medida arbitraria, lo que hemos hecho es tomar posesión legítima de un bien que le pertenece a todo el pueblo venezolano”, dijo Morejón en una entrevista difundida por la estatal Venezolana de Televisión.

El decreto, paso previo a la expropiación, se convirtió en ley tras su publicación el 9 de octubre en la Gaceta Oficial. De acuerdo al escrito, el presidente decretó la “adquisición forzosa de los activos, bienes muebles e

inmuebles, y bienhechurías... propiedad de las empresas Inversiones Pueblamar y Desarrollos M.B.K, C.A.”, empresas que hasta ahora no se han pronunciado al respecto.

Morejón destacó que la toma se está realizando a puertas abiertas y que los 13.000 socios de tiempo compartido podrán seguir disfrutando de los espacios del hotel y se respetarán sus condiciones contractuales.

“Siéntanse seguros todos los operadores (turísticos), todos los que tengan compromisos... que nosotros vamos a dar fiel cumplimiento de todos esos contratos”, acotó.

“Lo que queremos es mejorar esas instalaciones y que esas instalaciones sean abiertas también a la formación” de personal para el sector turístico, agregó.

El ministro señaló que el gobierno considera “necesario levantar un informe”, previo a la negociación, “porque el hotel está en deterioro”. □



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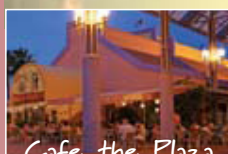
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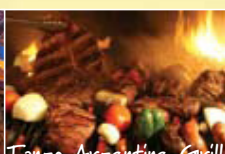
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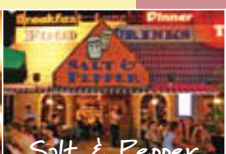
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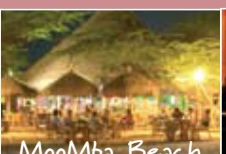
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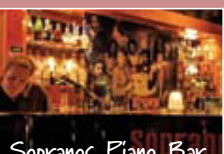
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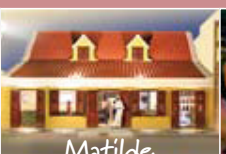
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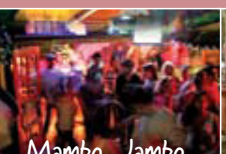
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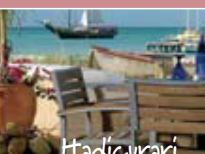
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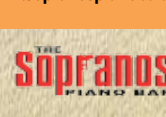
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